CE-998 1939
US 40 Bridge over AMTRAK
Elkton vicinity
public (unrestricted)

This bridge carries the eastbound lanes of US 40 over the AMTRAK main line near Elkton, Maryland. A series of steel beam segments measuring 60, 71, 74 and 58 feet, respectively, rest at their junctures on three concrete bents of four arches each. The entire structure is sheathed in concrete. The bents parallel the railroad, and the highway crosses the cut at an angle. As a result, the bridge is a parallelogram in plan, with its extreme points at the northeast and southwest corners.

The bridge is notable for its lively Art Deco/Moderne ornament. While the structure of the bridge is below grade (within the railroad cut), the visible and highly decorated sections of the bridge are its parapet walls. Above long horizontal panels which form the base of each wall are found continuous bands of decorated concrete. Within this band, a series of inset stepped zig-zags and quarter circles form the most striking feature of the bridge. A thin coping tops this section of the bridge walls, and curved piers mark each end of the structure.

The US 40 Bridge over AMTRAK represents only one of two historic concrete bridges -- part of Maryland's state road system in Cecil County, and one of nine bridges of the same structural type throughout the state road network -- identified by the Maryland Historical Trust for the Maryland Department of Transportation in a jointly conducted survey which took place during 1980-81.

SHA #7019 MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CE-998

MAGI# 0809983817

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

US 40 over AMTRAK

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Elkton

X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Cecil

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
X STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	X TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

State Highway Administration DOT

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

301 West Preston Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

__ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21201

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Cecil County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Elkton

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CE-998

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
_EXCELLENT	_DETERIORATED	xUNALTERED	xORIGINAL SITE
xGOOD	_RUINS	_ALTERED	_MOVED DATE_____
_FAIR	_UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The bridge under examination is the southernmost of a pair of bridges and carries the eastbound lanes of US 40 across the Amtrak main line near (on the southeast end of) Elkton, Maryland. The structure's orientation is shifted a few points to the NW and SE. Technically, a series of steel beam segments of 60',71',74' and 58', which rest at their junctions on three concrete bents of four arches each, the entire structure is sheathed in concrete. The bents parallel the railroad, and the highway crosses the cut at an angle. As a result, the bridge is a parallelogram, in plan, with its extreme points at the NE and SW corners, and the bents support the beams at a correspondingly oblique angle.

The most visible parts of the bridge are the parapet walls. All structure is below grade, within therailroad cut, and not visible from the highway. The walls are approximately six feet high and 18" thick, and consist of four panels, which correpond in length to the steel beams, and separated by piers which mark the location of the bents. The panels are decorated in a sequence of shallow rebel pearls; at the bottom is a continuous band of planar concrete about three feet in height; above that is a band broken into a series of triangles by a continuous zig-zag stripe of about 8" in width, set back slightly from the plane below. Within each triangle formed below the zig-zag the upper side edges are stepped back in three steps, leaving a small planar triangle set back deeply from the lower band. Above the zig-zag a quarter circle is set deeply into each angle, and is then brought forward in a series of quarter-circular steps corresponding in scale to those of the lower triangle. Above this decorative band is a narrow fillet, brought slightly forward, and aobve this is a final, wide coping, once more brought forward. The motif is repeated on both sides of both walls. Between these panels are piers which begin as simple, somewhat expanded sections of the walls, with no articulation. After a short space they rise vertically an inch and then along a bevel for several inches and then flatten, and return in the same manner. This major portion of the pier is also brought forward slightly from the plane of the walls, and is scored in the center with three shallow verticle grooves. The piers and the walls are not connected, but are in fact separated by about an inch. The four ends of the whole walls are finished with additional piers and by large simple scrolls which taper from the top of the piers in three curves, convex, convave, a short verticle drop, and another convex. Portions of these walls have been damaged and have been patched with concrete, obliterating some of the detail.

While the structure below the roadway is largely obscured from view, it is not devoid of ornament. There is a two band coping between the bottoms of the parapet walls and the concrete sheathed beams

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CE-998
US 40 over Amtrak

7. (continued)

below, broken by the continuous verticle drop of the piers, unbroken to ground level. The scoring is also continuous. The supporting bents consist of a series of verticle supports with low concrete slab walls between them on ground level, and concrete arches above, beneath a final lintel on which rests the bridge beam. The lower slab and the arch spandrels are set back from the verticle supports. These latter are scored like the piers above, except that these channels reach only partway to the ground, and the central is longer than the others.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

CE-998

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	X ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1939 BUILDER/ARCHITECT In-house design of State Roads Comm.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The structure is notable primarily for its lively art-deco/ modern ornament. Concrete and concrete-and-steel bridges are the most common engineering structures in Maryland, especially since about 1930, and some small effort is usually made to articulate the surface of the concrete and lend some visual interest to the structure. It is very rare, however, to find a bridge on which a designer has gone to such length for appearance. The only comparable Maryland structure in those terms is the concrete bridge at Glyndonin Baltimore County (BA-2070/SHA# 3071).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CE-998

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Condit, Carl, American Building Art, 20th Century, New York, Oxford University Press, 1061.

Greif, Martin, Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America, New York, Universe Books, 1975.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

Quadrangle Name: Elkton, MD
Quadrangle Scale: 1:24 000
UTM References: 18.427718.438419

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

NA

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
NA	
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
John Hnedak/M/DOT Survey Manager

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Maryland Historical Trust	1980
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
21 State Circle	(301) 269-2438
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Annapolis	Maryland 21401

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

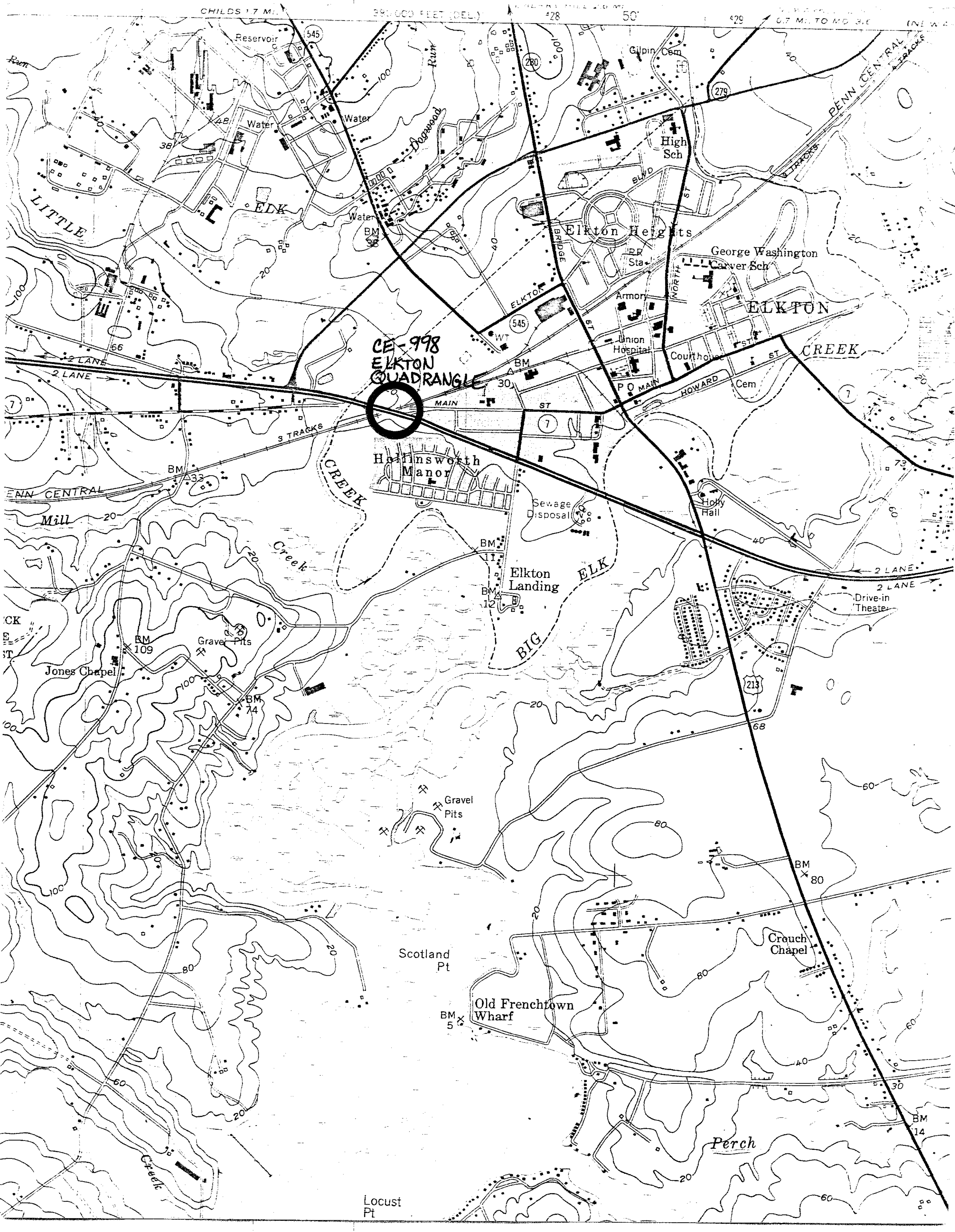
RECOMMENDATIONS

This bridge is unique in Maryland by virtue of its highly decorated superstructure. Only one or two comparable structures exist in the state, and none approach the exuberance with which this art-deco design was handled. It is sufficiently interesting to warrant extra attention, beyond the protections of 4-F and 106, which are accorded by the Board of Public Works Policy. Luckily, the structure seems to be in good condition and adequate for its current load. This cannot be said within assurance from within the scope of this project, of course, and if there is any doubt as to the general adequacy of the structure, it should be brought to light as soon as possible.

If the structure is indeed as sound as it appears to be to the non-engineer, its preservation requirements are simple:

1. Several patches to the parapets have been made which are very unsightly, a mere application of concrete to the existing surface. This should be reversed whenever possible.

2. Future patches and repairs should be done to conform precisely with the original structure; new work should be articulated exactly as the old work.


CE-998
ELKTON
QUADRANGLE
Reservoir
Water
Gilpin Cem
High Sch
LITTLE ELK
Dogwood Run
Elkton Heights
George Washington Carver Sch
RR Sta
Armory
ELKTON
Union Hospital
Courthouse
CREEK
PO
MAIN ST
HOWARD
Cem
NORTH ST
BRIDGE ST
ELKTON BLVD
PENN CENTRAL
3 TRACKS
2 LANE
Hollinsworth Manor
Sewage Disposal
Holly Hall
Mill Creek
Elkton Landing
BIG ELK
Drive-in Theater
Gravel Pits
Jones Chapel
Scotland Pt
Crouch Chapel
Old Frenchtown Wharf
Perch
Locust Pt
CHILDS 1.7 MI.
390 000 FEET (DEL)
50'

Eckton

CE-998

CE-998
US.40 over Amtrack
eastbound

M/DOT survey
JDH/RDM Summer 1980

CE-998
US 40 over Amtrak
M/DOT
Hnedak/Meyer
Summer1980

CE-998
US 40 over Amtrak
eastbound

M/DOT survey
JDH/RDM Summer 1980